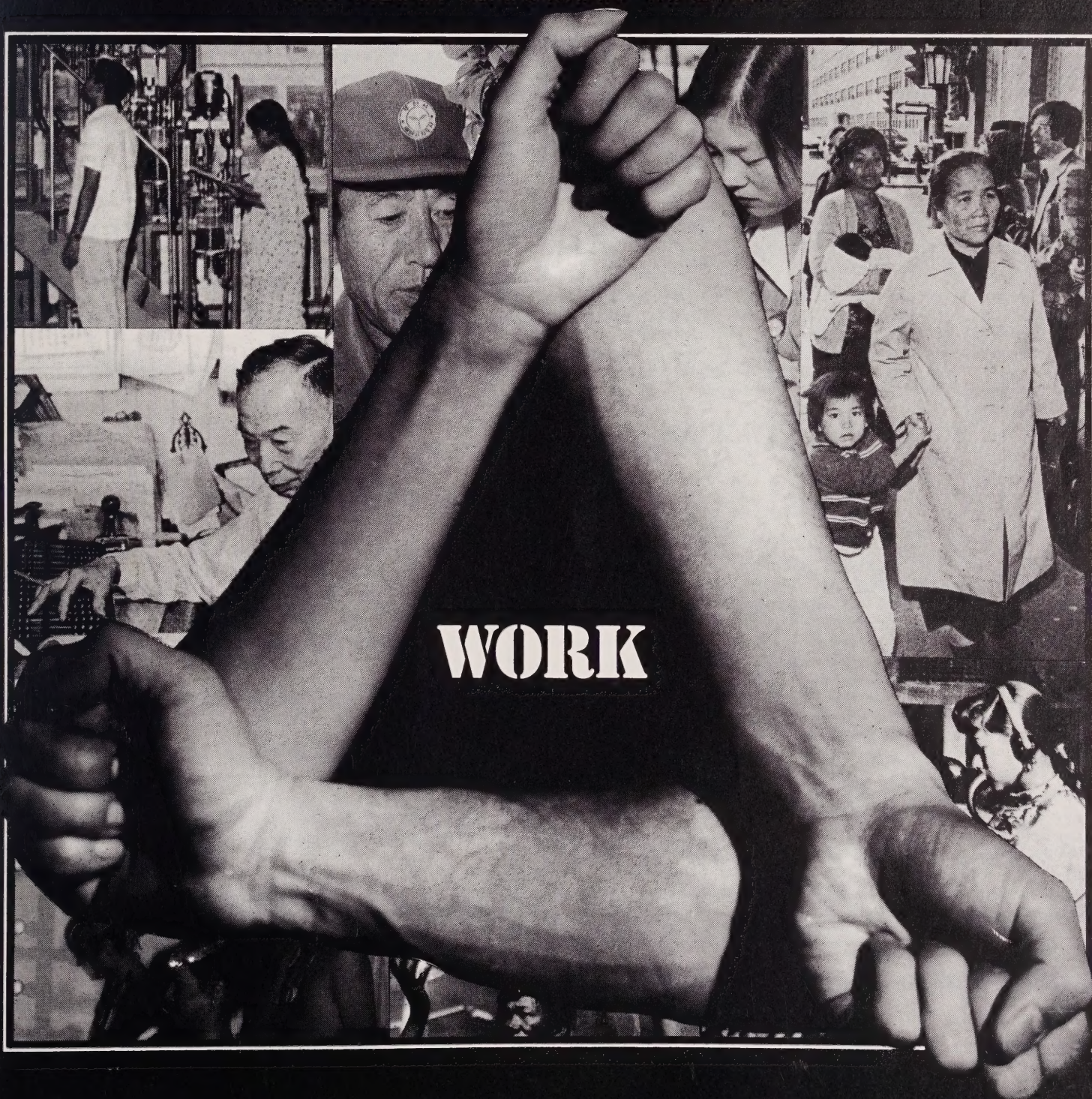


VOL.1 NO.4 \$1.00

THE ASIANADIAN

AN ASIAN CANADIAN MAGAZINE



The Artists

Cover Design: Wayne Lum, Sunny Urata
Cover Photography: Leonard Van
Graphic Design: Carson Young

Wayne Lum

Wayne Lum is currently the art director of In The Sunrise, Global Television News, and CTV News in Toronto. His extensive creative experience includes graphic and set design for the CBC-TV production, "Bethune", Canadian Opera Company, National Ballet, Stratford Shakespearean Festival, Toronto Dance Theatre, and Theatre Passe Muraille. Wayne has also taught drawing and sculpture for George Brown College and the Toronto Board of Education.

He is a graduate in Sculpture from the Ontario College of Art.

Sunao (Sunny) Urata

"... Everything is so clean and icy and slick ... the lips and lipstick colours are sensuously full and subtly lush-- like a hothouse scene through sunglasses."

So wrote an art critic of Sunny's showing, "Acrylic Kisses", at the Morris Gallery-- further establishing Sunny as one of Canada's early pop artists.

Sunny's broad background includes graphic design, animation, stone and wood carving. He has also taught at the George Brown College and for the Toronto Board of Education.

Sunny has spent the past several years travelling extensively throughout western Canada and the United States.

Leonard Van

Our cover photographer, Leonard Van, is a graduate in photography from Humber College, Toronto.

Born in Vietnam, Leonard has lived and worked in Hong Kong, Europe, and the United States before coming to Canada in 1972. Leonard studied political science and architecture.

He is presently freelancing in Toronto.

Carson Young

Carson Young is a graduate in communication and design from the Ontario College of Art. He is presently art director for T.P. O'Malley, an advertising and promotional firm. Carson previously worked as a graphic designer for D. I. Communication and Atwell Fleming Printing.

He is responsible for our 'new look' in layout and graphic design this issue.

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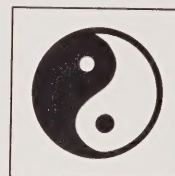
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Sex & Culture

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Asianadian Aims:

- 1) To find new dignity and pride in being Asian in Canada.
- 2) To promote an understanding between Asian Canadians and other Canadians.
- 3) To speak out against those conditions, individuals and institutions perpetuating racism in Canada.
- 4) To stand up against the distortions of our history in Canada, stereotypes, economic exploitations, and the general tendency towards injustice and inequality practised on minority groups.
- 5) To provide a forum for Asian Canadian writers, artists, musicians, etc.
- 6) To promote unity by bridging the gap between Asians with roots in Canada and recent immigrants.



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The magazine welcomes submissions of critical essays, community articles, poetry, art work, short stories and reviews concerning the Asian experience in Canada, as well as letters to the Editor. Manuscripts will only be returned if accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. The opinions expressed in this issue are not necessarily those of the editorial collective.

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Great Canadian Myths

By Bobby Siu

Ask any Asian immigrant and he will tell you that Canada is a land of opportunity. Many of us believe that if we are willing to work hard, we will make it. This belief is prevalent among new immigrants who come with or without their families. They hope for a better life and a well-paid job. Even if they are not successful at present, they keep on trying, hoping one day they will have their dreams fulfilled.

Although the Canadian government has been selling the image of Canada as a "Land of Opportunity", Asians in Canada experience otherwise. Apart from the few Asians who manage to get professional jobs, the rest are clustered in the technical and service sectors of the economy. The latter two deprive Asians from making important decisions pertinent to their well-being or of national significance. In fact, jobs such as typing and punching computer cards are devoid of creativity and largely monotonous. A significant portion of Asians (20 percent) are shuffled into manual manufacturing jobs where work is mechanized, routinized, and generally boring. With the exception of those holding professional or managerial jobs, Asians do not receive decent pay cheques.

Many would say that these Asians probably do not have the qualifications or ability to perform highly paid and creative jobs. This is far from the truth. In the name of "incompetence" or "lack of Canadian experience" (a topic on which I will elaborate later), many Asian women, for example, who hold degrees from universities, are given general clerical jobs (such as bank-tellers) or even have problems obtaining a job (any job!). One could argue that un(der)employment is a general current phenomenon in Canada and there is nothing racist about this. However, the situation is much more complex; the very fact that Asian immigrants are generally not accepted in the same way as immigrants from the British Isles or other European countries means that Asians have great difficulties in integrating into White circles. Consider the fact that over 60 percent of Canadians don't have immigrant friends, and "many Canadians... have never entertained an immigrant in their homes nor carried on a personal conversation with one" (Ontario Economic Council's *Immigrants Integration*, 1970). This certainly puts Asians in a disadvantaged position either in hunting for jobs or job promotion. It has been documented that "connections" are more important than achievement performance in obtaining jobs, especially the first one. Asians just do not have the "connections" needed in this so-called "achievement-oriented" society.

Even though Asians (especially the Chinese) have been praised as being highly ambitious and hardworking, and as a group they are "over-represented" (sic) in the professional fields, Asian immigrants as a whole suffer

downward mobility when they move to Canada. This means that many Asians, *despite* their abilities and qualifications, are underemployed. It also means that Asians have to work harder to get jobs similar to those which many white Canadians obtain with relative ease. This is a mockery of the egalitarian ideology so many of us believe in, and an insult to the talents of Asians.

When we think seriously about the myth that Canada is a land of opportunity, an immediate question comes to mind: the opportunity to do *what*? In the contemporary Canadian reality, Asians have the opportunity to do work that under-utilizes their talents and abilities and which exploits the Asian habit of hard work and tolerance. Increasingly, there are opportunities to do absolutely nothing except receive welfare cheques. This certainly is a sad case in Canadian history.

But, then, some would argue: "You people asked for it! Immigrants either steal the jobs from Canadians or inflate the unemployment figures." This attitude is, of course, reinforced (if not initiated) by the recent changes in immigration policy which restrict the influx of immigrants. The implications of this racist attitude are obvious: without immigrants Canada would not suffer from unemployment or underemployment.

Well, let's look at immigration and unemployment statistics. For every group, irrespective of its geographic origin, there has been a drop in the immigration absolutely (in number) and relatively (in percentage) since the late 1960's. The number of Asian immigrants dropped from 45,699 (in 1975-76) to 29,585 (in 1977-78). Meanwhile, the unemployment rate has been climbing higher and higher each year since the late 1960's -- from 3.6% (in 1966) to 8.5% (in September 1978). This illustrates that even with fewer immigrants coming to Canada, the employment situation has not improved. Well, there goes the racist myth.

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The relationship between immigration and employment can be looked at from another angle. Immigrants from Asian countries working in Canada actually save the Canadian government and its taxpayers a lot of money. The immigration policy initiated in the late 1960's resulted in the recruitment of well educated personnel from Asian countries. If Canada had educated these professionals, it would have had to spend millions of extra dollars. Canada thus reaped the benefits at a time when so many Asian countries desperately needed trained personnel to develop. Besides saving Canadians money in educational expenses, these immigrants brought into Canada a sum of money well into the millions. For example, students from abroad bring over \$60,000,000 per year into the Canadian economy. This money provides jobs for indigenous people as well as stimulating the economy.

When Asians apply for jobs, one of the first few questions asked is: "Do you have Canadian experience?" This question presupposes that (a) Asians were not born here in Canada, and (b) Canadian experience is crucial for carrying out jobs. Let us examine these two assumptions carefully: First of all, in 1971, there were at least tens of thousands of Asians in Canada who had been born here. To these Asians who have spent their lives here, it seems condescending, if not racist, to ask whether or not they have Canadian experience. They are as much a part of the Canadian heritage as the Anglo-Saxons, French, or Indians in Canada. It appears that many white Canadians still refuse to accept Asians as Canadians.

The second assumption is that Canadian experience is important for the performance of jobs. Well, what does "Canadian experience" actually mean? If a xerox machine can duplicate materials or a laundry washer clean clothes, does it make any difference whether these machines have Canadian experience or not? Even if we assume that "Canadian experience" means knowledge of community services, corporate styles of handling business, etc. which are peculiar to the Canadian context, can this knowledge not be learned in a short period of time ("training period")? In fact, many jobs in Canada are increasingly automatized and do not require "Canadian" experience.

If we interpret "Canadian experience" as certain standards of expertise or professionalism, then it is doubtful that having "Canadian experience" is a desirable thing. As we all know, the Canadian standard of science and technology is certainly not the highest on a world scale. In fact, the government spends little of its revenue on science and development research. So why do Asians have to confront questions such as, "Do you have Canadian experience?" In its subtlety, this question is a form of intimidation of Asian immigrants and is also a way of justifying not hiring an Asian or putting an Asian in a lower-paid job.

If you are not convinced that the notions that "Canada is a land of opportunity", "immigrants create problems for the Canadian economy", and "Canadian experience is needed for jobs" are nothing but myths, take a careful look at the much-cherished government policy of "multi-culturalism" in building a Canadian mosaic. Thanks to government propaganda work as well as the work of some academicians, Canadians (including many Asians) are proud of the fact that their country is "multi-cultural" and different from the American "melting pot".

"Multi-culturalism" boils down to an ideology which keeps many ethnic groups, Asian included, in their place. Asians are encouraged by the government to keep their own cultural traditions and values; but they cannot enter the elite circles where decisions are

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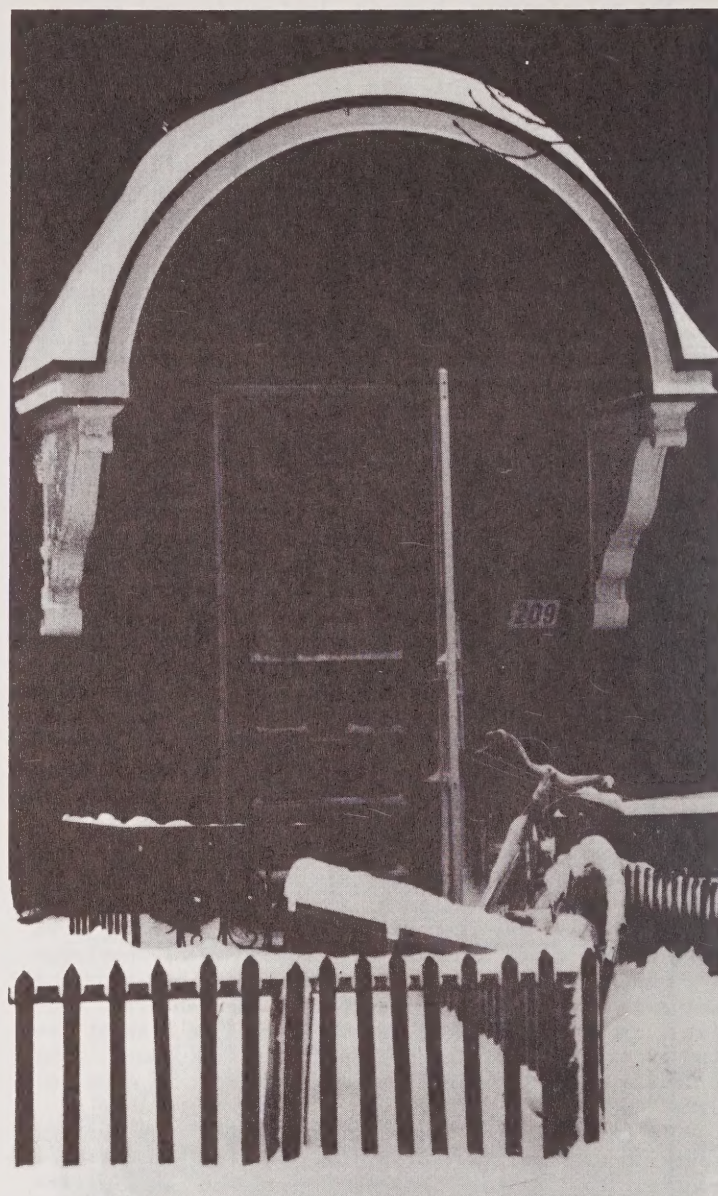
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made and wealth is kept. Positions in these circles are reserved for Anglo-Saxons and their culture is the dominant one in Canada. Canada is like a zoo in which a variety of ethnic groups are caged: they may have their ethnic foods, dances, festivals, dresses, languages, etc., but they cannot come out and run the zoo. Once in a while, they give a few performances to entertain the host or themselves, and the zoo manager tells the guests: "Hey, look! Our zoo is multi-cultural. They are free to do their own thing!"

Yes, Asians are free to do their own thing *provided* that they are locked up in their cultures. This may be seen in the recent condemnation of Chinese as working "too hard" or as "too ambitious". When many of them earned professional degrees and knocked at the elite door, an Anglo-Saxon voice answered: "Sorry! No room at the top." Clement and Olsen's studies of corporate and state elites in Canada illustrate this point well: Asians are so under-represented that they don't even show up in statistics. This phenomenon is prevalent not only on the national level, but also on the provincial and municipal levels.

"Multi-culturalism" is an attempt on the part of the government to keep Asians, along with other ethnic groups, in their little sub-cultures. These sub-cultures, while forming a colourful mosaic, are statically cemented in Canada. Asians, among other ethnic groups, are treated as second class and third class citizens, with little or no social mobility. "Multi-culturalism" stops at the elite level. Asians are not involved in directing the economic or political development of the country, and are shuffled to the periphery of the Canadian society, all in the name of "multi-culturalism".

Bobby Siu teaches sociology at McMaster University.





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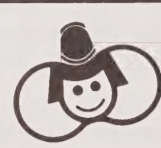
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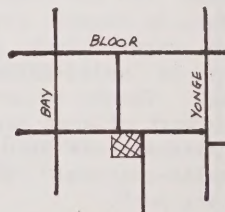


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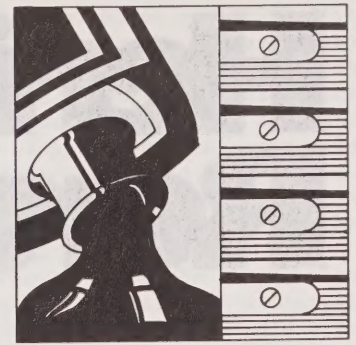
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Editorial



The cry of unemployment has been echoed by the contending parties in this 1979 version of how Canada's democratic process works. Yet hidden behind the election pizazz, media hype, spoiled Maggie's hackneyed bewilderment about life, and accusations of treason behind the unity call is the old story of the influence of a person's colour on employment prospects and promotion.

Picture the everyday life of Asians in Canada from the oldest to the youngest, from the very beginnings to the present day, and the most common cliché that pops into the mind is that they work hard. Backbreaking work built this country-- its railroads-- cities-- expanding across the continent, and in the midst of all this activity-- at the bottom-- were Asians.

In this special work issue, *The Asianadian* deals with several questions. What is the occupational status of Asian Canadians in the economic structure of this country? What are the human consequences of being unemployed or underemployed? Why are Asian Canadians treated in this way? And, how do Asian Canadians respond to their plight?

W. M. Lee's *But, Do You Have Canadian Experience?* portrays Chinese labourers working at the bottom of Canadian society in a racist environment. *50¢ Special At the Panama* by Chen Shancheung illustrates the low status of an immigrant Chinese at the turn of this century, and his diligence in upgrading himself and his family. Anjana Murthy's *East Indian Working Women* presents a general picture of the distressing employment situation of one of the fastest growing Asian work sectors in Toronto. Being women and Asian, they already have two strikes against them from their white male and female counterparts in almost every job they hold. Where are they found? In low level occupations? You guessed it-- professional and clerical!

Why are Asian Canadians put down despite their hard work, qualifications, and experience? The answer is partially revealed in what John A. MacDonald said in 1882: the Chinese "profitably and successfully developed" British Columbia because they were "a cheap class labour". There is a Japanese saying: "Peasants are like sesame seeds, the more you squeeze, the more you get out." This applies equally well to the Asian workers in Canada. There are, of course, other reasons such as racist attitudes which regard Whites as superior to Asians and the desire to make Canada "a nation of White men." Thus, racial discrimination can benefit Canadian industrialists and justify government policies. (See the articles by Bobby Siu and W. M. Lee).

To make the Asian Canadians happy with their place in the economic structure, and to convince other Canadians that Asian Canadians should be there, several lies have been perpetuated: Asians are 'sojourners' (Chen Shancheung's article), "immigrants create problems for the Canadian economy", "Canadian experience

is needed for jobs", 'multiculturalism' (Bobby Siu's article), and "Chinamen as evil" (*Dubious Award*). We don't buy any of these myths, and strongly reject them. We see these myths perpetuating ethnic inequality.

No-where jobs, underemployment, and unemployment have harmful effects on our lives. The stories in *Face to Face* and *We're Just Children* reveal what Asian children have to go through to help their parents make a living in; the round-the-clock work life of some poorly paid service persons; the disenchantment of the underemployed; the bitter feelings caused by job insecurity and exploitation among immigrant workers because of their difficulty in speaking the official languages and the non-acceptance of white Canadians.

The Asians' response to these problems has historically been "shuckin' and jivin'"--Asianadians should be 'nice'. In the face of extreme racist attacks, we had to band together to protect ourselves as we did in the community-wide strike in Victoria in 1878 when the employment of Chinese was prohibited. Asianadians then, as now, had to protect themselves.

In this issue, two items require special comment. The new *Heritage Reruns* tells the story of Asianadians in history. We also have a brand-new design for this issue bringing forth the constantly creative force of Asianadians. 'Gill Kayo' is the typographic set used in our department headlines and extra illustrations have been added to the articles. These innovations bring to our magazine a new look. We hope this doesn't make you nervous. It works and so do we.



—Photo from City Archives

CHINESE WORK GANG, 1881-84

Sir John A. Macdonald said, "Either you must have this labor or you can't have the (Canadian Pacific) railway"

Heritage Reruns

50¢ SPECIAL AT THE PANAMA



By Chen Shan Cheung

"If you want to be a real Canadian, you've got to change your name," so said a white friend to Chan Dun who just opened the Panama Cafe in Victoria, B.C. in 1910.

For a while Chan Dun did call himself "Mr. Dun, Proprietor of The Panama" -- one of Victoria's oldest Chinese landmarks that flourished until 1967. Today, the sturdy three storey structure that housed three generations at 1407 Government Street is matronly, shrouded in knit wear and woolen garments. The change from restaurant to clothing store came from Victoria's urge to become part of the outside world.

The big boom of shopping centre development in Victoria accelerated in the early 1960's. It became fashionable to lunch at Paul's at the Mayfair or one of the fast food chains like McDonald's. A quick bite for less in an antiseptic, plastic world of frozen

chips and portion-controlled burgers. The Panama Cafe was lost under the changing blitz of assembly line service. It was a new age in the restaurant trade all across North America. Fast food meant fast bucks.

The Panama Cafe with its low back counter stools, so close you could eat off your neighbour's plate, and genuine marble tables could not contain the popular need for privacy while dining on cool white tablecloths with subdued service. Not even the 50¢ turkey special of roll and butter, dessert, and beverage every Thanksgiving could make a dent in the trend towards 'modern times'.

While the Panama's deep dish apple pie and fresh baked bread gave way to the retiring and sobering confines of socks and sweaters, the Chan family in Victoria remains an example of the urge of one Chinese peasant boy leaving Toisan in Kuangtung at the age of twelve in 1890 to seek a better life in Canada. Despite racial discrimination in, for example, the city bylaws forbidding the employment of white waitresses, no voting rights, and the \$50 head tax that Chan Dun paid, the restaurant and the family were to flourish.

Chan Dun never came to Canada simply to exploit its wealth. He was not a sojourner--a myth perpetuated and fictionalized by white apologists of racism so that their hatred of the Chinese could be concealed. Chan Dun did not cross the treacherous Pacific to the Gold Mountain to milk Canada of its riches and scurry back to China to live in luxury among wife and concubines. His was not a sojourner's mentality that many white Canadians thought the Chinese possessed so that deportation of Chinese labourers could ease the guilt of a supposedly democratic Canada with its tradition of English 'fair play'. Yet Chan Dun did not suffer the same fate as his first daughter-in-law's grandfather whose sweat help build the Canadian Pacific Railway only to be sent back to China once his labour was no longer needed.

Arriving in Victoria under the sponsorship of Chan Sui, a village kinsman, the peasant boy and son of a coal miner began picking seaweed in the Willow beach area. That product, sought after as a condiment, soup base, and main course by the Chinese brought Chan Dun into contact with the commercial population of Chinatown. In the early 1890's, his first encounter with a Westerner as employer ended in the menial job of a houseboy in a St. Charles Street house. This work gave Chan Dun the opportunity to study the eating habits and behaviour of a white Canadian that would be beneficial in later years.

After a little more than a year as a servant, Chan Dun became a cook on the Canadian Pacific -Victoria to Port Essington run. After seven years, his repertoire of Western recipes improved and expanded. The idea of a Western style cafe catering to the taste and limited resources of the common working man began to form during those learning years on the C.P.R. boats.



Koo Shee

In 1900 when China was to arrogantly encounter the imperialists during the Boxer Uprising while learning nothing, Chan Dun progressed steadily in the knowledge of the market and commercial value of the Western food trade by forming a silent partnership with Chan Sui. This involvement in the buying and selling of grocery products not only provided him with important contacts with wholesalers and farmers, but also a new status as merchant.

Chan Dun's new occupational role as merchant was later to help him bring a bride from Hong Kong. In contrast, Chinese labourers, by law, were forbidden to raise a family in Canada. The rationale behind this was to prevent the 'yellow horde' from taking root in white Canada. This state of affair brought about the then visible bachelor society in Chinatown. Without a family to sustain the spirit of rural Chinese men, prostitution, drugs, and gambling flourished. Chinatown was considered evil because of these vices. But the law prohibiting Chinese men from participating in family life was uncivilized and obscene.

From his short and profitable time as a partner in the grocery trade, Chan Dun opened a series of restaurants from 1902 to 1910. His first was the Montreal Cafe on lower Johnson Street operated with nine partners. This venture lasted a year due to the site owner's refusal to renew his one-year lease, perhaps at the instigation of white restaurant owners who viewed the Montreal Cafe as unfair competition. This was a temporary setback for Chan Dun who shortly thereafter opened the White Cafe on the corner of Broad and Johnson. This time, he not only bought the lease, but also bought out his partners. From the White Cafe came the Tourist Cafe on Johnson. With each enterprise, Chan Dun could assess the market finally recognizing that a solid restaurant venture catering to the white working class could not survive in Chinatown.

In 1910, the Panama Cafe- a block away from Fisgard Street and Chinatown- went up for sale because the Japanese proprietor felt that fishing was more his calling than the sedentary life of a cafe owner. The Panama Cafe, along with its name, building, and land was sold to Chan Dun. For 57 years, the cafe stood as a landmark for good solid food-- no frills, low prices, and congenial service. Its seating capacity was 84 including 12 counter stools. It was tailor-made for the appetites of Victoria's working people.

The beginning of the Panama Cafe in 1910 also brought a new change in Chan Dun's life. The potential of the cafe was enough to induce Chan Sui and his wife to serve as marriage brokers. At 33, Chan Dun was long overdue to take a bride. With Christian connections in Hong Kong through the United Church in Victoria-- where Chan Sui and his wife were members -- the daughter of a three generation Chinese missionary family, Koo Shee of the Namhoi district was betrothed to Chan Dun. Like all Chinese marriages at that time, Koo Shee had no say in the arrangements. The only image that she had of her future home was that Canada was a Christian country.

On January 12, 1911, Chan Dun, who was a member of the Presbyterian Church, married Hong Kong-born Koo Shee. The Reverend J.C. Campbell presided over the ceremony. The close connection with the minister and Chan Dun had previously brought about the beginning of the Chinese Presbyterian Church on North Park Street. It was at the night school of this church that Chan Dun formally learned English.

Chan Dun's keen interest in the Christian religion and the cafe trade was not his only preoccupation. Developments in China also occupied his time and energy. His interest in Chinese politics led to the establishment of a flying school in 1917 with himself as principal. The two branches in the Willows and Esquimalt areas were supervised by an underling, Captain



Brown who also served as chief instructor. The purpose of this school was to train overseas Chinese to fight in the China wars and for the republican cause now that the Manchu dynasty had expired in 1911.

Chan Dun's republican learnings also led him to become an active member of Sun Yat-sen's Kuomintang. Just after the establishment of the Chinese republic in 1912, he helped start the *Chinese Republic News* in Victoria. This tabloid was a vehicle for keeping Chinese informed of the events of China.

Chan Dun's active involvement in Chinese politics not only showed his patriotism to China, but also revealed another racist attitude towards the Chinese. The right to vote in British Columbian elections--a mark of citizenship -- was not available until 1947. And this came under heavy pressure from the C.C.F. (now N.D.P.) on the liberal government. It had always been this leftist party, labour organizations, and veterans' groups that lobbied for the enfranchisement of the Chinese. Without these pressures, the Liberal party would not have acted. Because of their denial of the right to vote, Chinese political interests were never Canadian-directed. Outside influences as well as the accessibility of Chinese politics oriented Chan Dun and many other Chinese towards China and its political development.

Chan Dun's commitment to Canada was not a unique phenomenon among the Chinese. He was merely one of the many determined to make Canada a permanent home despite discriminatory legislation and attitudes. If indeed Chan Dun was a sojourner, the racism that he and others encountered would have driven them back to China. The success of his business would have provided the necessary funds for a return to Canton. But like many others, Chan Dun was willing to suffer the adversities, remain in Canada, and raise a family. His story is not

simply a description of a successful cafe owner, but a stark and relevant commentary of a Chinese in Canadian history.



introduction to Heritage Reruns

We are proud to introduce Heritage Reruns - a new department relating the lives and memories of ordinary Asian Canadians across Canada. They are stories of determination, despair, hard work and courage. The experiences of these people irrevocably shaped their hopes, attitudes and aspirations-- and, consequently, have subtly directed the values and lifestyles of their children.

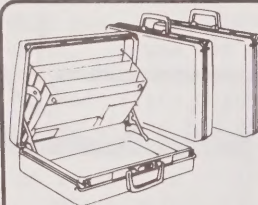
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Dubious Award



HOW TORONTO'S GANG FROM PENANG GOT THEIR MEN

Mountie girls fly around world in drug bust

MURIEL WOOD/TORONTO STAR

The *Asianadian's* Dubious Award is given quarterly to writers, artists, companies or organizations for outstanding achievements in stereotyped journalism and advertising.

This issue's Dubious Award goes to: Muriel Wood and Bob Graham

Comments from the Award Jury

There is a saying: "Old habits die hard." Perhaps the cliché cannot be more appropriate than in Western countries where imperialism created its own myth about the colonized people.

The above picture by Muriel Wood was printed in the *Toronto Star*, on February 25, 1979, page A3. The picture was used to illustrate Bob Graham's article entitled, "Mountie Girls Fly Around World in Drug Bust." The article, beside its content and melodramatic plot, is overtly racist.

The attempt to portray a squint-eyed Chinese beneath the Mounties' claw as 'Chinamen' once again evokes the Chinese people as "hoodlum, dope-peddler and bad guy." But gone are the days when Hollywood movies were considered to be the chief source of information of the Asian people. The activities of the Asian people are not confined to drug trafficking and other criminal activities, but extend enormously to various aspects of human pursuits. If Western writers such as Mr. Graham were a bit more imaginative, they would find numerous historical events which are as equally interesting as the history of Western civilization.



The word 'Chinaman' has been kicking around in the Western world for a long time. It at once conveys the whole circle of the bad worlds. 'Chinaman' clothes himself with black evil as his rainment; his dubious looking moustache and shaven-head does not mean a good mind but an evil one. This image of the 'Chinaman' persists. When it continues to be used with a wider connotation, it embraces the Chinese people at large.

The word 'Chinaman', thus, envisages a social world, divided into good and bad. It is seen to be a form of Manichaeism. It explains that the current of the world will be determined by the struggle of the good (whiteman) and bad (Chinaman). As long as the evil exists, no peace and happiness can be achieved; its total annihilation is thus essential for happiness and tranquility. The 'Chinaman' must be annihilated. So, it is not hard for us to understand how a vacuum develops in this society and how much the media are responsible for its breeding and dissemination.

- CHASHA

East Indian Working Women

By Anjana Murthy

There are a number of factors which necessitated many immigrant women to work outside of home in Canada: lack of accumulated assets in the early years of immigration, low occupational status of their husbands, rising costs of living, and widespread unemployment. All these factors accentuate the need for two incomes in the immigrant families.

The Indian Immigrant Aid Services conducted a survey of the employment status of East Indian women in Toronto in the summer of 1977, and this article summarizes some of the findings especially in the areas of educational/employment status and job satisfaction.

Out of a sample of 360 East Indian women, 37% responded. Most of them (61%) were from Asia, and the rest came from Africa, West Indies/Guyana, U.K., U.S., and Europe. Half of these respondents were recent immigrants who had lived in Canada for less than 3 years. Most of these women aged from 27 to 38 and were married.

Half of these women had some university education, and some of these university-educated women were trained in the West. A third of these women have their Master degrees or higher, usually in the fields of natural sciences. Some were trained in engineering, architecture, social work, education, medicine, and nursing. For those without university education, many had taken a Canadian skill training course mainly in business programs. The latter were mostly short term courses and impart a low level of skill.

A little over half of these women worked before arriving in Canada. Most of them had held professional jobs, and some were in clerical fields. Less than 2% had worked in factories.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

About 60% of the women under survey were employed. However, one-third of them described themselves as 'unemployed'. Most of these employed women were working full-time, and many of them were in clerical fields. There was only a small proportion of them working in the sales and service sector.

The percentage of East Indian women employed in clerical occupations (40%) is slightly higher than that of Canadian women in the same fields (36%) in 1975. However, these East Indian clerical workers held jobs at low levels of skill and pay. They were mainly bookkeeping clerks, general office clerks, file clerks, keypunch operators, mailroom clerks, and stock clerks.

Roughly a third of the East Indian women were in professional occupations (compared with the 23% of all Canadian working women who were in professional jobs in 1975). These East Indian professional women were em-

ployed in social sciences (27%), teaching (23%), natural sciences, engineering and mathematics (18%), and administration or management (8%). Although they may be classified as 'professional', they were actually working on the sub-professional level. For example, in the field of library science, a majority of them were employed as library technicians rather than as librarians. This pattern is also obvious in other fields where East Indian women were hired as medical technologists, nurses, or elementary school teachers. They appeared to be clustered at the lower echelons of the professions.

Compared with the average Canadian women (6%) in factory work, East Indian women had a higher percentage (11%) in manual work such as fabricating, assembling, and repairing. Many of these 'working class' women were in the garment industry where they worked as sewing machine operators.

EDUCATIONAL STATUS

Non-Western university education of East Indian women was not quite relevant in the Canadian context. Very often, an undergraduate degree from a non-Western university was rated as a Canadian grade 13 diploma. A master degree usually meant 2 years of Canadian university education. Less than 3% of the women with a teaching degree were able to obtain a letter of standing or an interim teaching certificate in Ontario. A recent immigrant with a MSW and several years of related work experience succeeded in obtaining a BSW (Canadian) from the Association of Professional Social Workers. However, this did not mean much when she applied for jobs because a distinction seemed to exist between a degree obtained in Canada and a degree recognized as equivalent to a Canadian degree.

Needless to say, women with degrees from Western universities had an easier time in getting jobs than those with non-Western degrees. But the surprising thing is that women with only 13 years of schooling fared slightly better in the job market than did the women with non-Western university degrees. Some of the latter failed to obtain any professional jobs, and were working in clerical fields or in factories. The underutilization of professional capacities is alarming, for those women without any 'Canadian experience' (whatever that means) had some difficulties in securing jobs in their trained fields.

JOB SATISFACTION (OR DISSATISFACTION)

Well over a third of the employed women indicated that they were dissatisfied with their jobs. This is especially obvious for those in manual work. These dissatisfied workers felt that their skills and education are under-utilized, opportunities for advancement are lacking, and their wages are too low.

We strongly disagree with the view expressed in *Report on the Immigrant Women in the Labour Force* (Women's Bureau, 1975). It claimed that "job satisfaction is irrelevant for most of them and there is a strong tendency to be dissatisfied with the job they have outside home." In the context of that report, it appears that immigrant women had been traditionally brought up to stay at home, and therefore they do not find working outside exciting. This is nonsensical because immigrant women work out of economic necessity. Very often, they do not have the chance or the leisure to select their work. In fact, job satisfaction is a key concern of these women. They like to see advancement on the job, compatible working atmosphere, reasonable wages, and good employer-employee relationships.

THE QUESTION OF CANADIAN EXPERIENCE

Three-quarters of the unemployed women in the sample found it difficult to find a job in accordance to their training because of the so-called 'Canadian experience'. Some even thought a 'Canadian accent' is important in securing employment. Many job-seekers mentioned that the employers rarely gave them a chance to discuss non-Western experience. Most university-educated women expressed a need for a fair assessment of non-Western education and work experience. In the field of social sciences, many employers assume that immigrants don't understand Canadian society. It really does not matter how long the immigrants lived in Canada before applying for jobs in social sciences as some social workers can tell you. East Indian women were hired to work with East Indians; and such jobs are scarce.

Work experience in Canada of less than one year hardly counts as valid experience. Usually, Canadian experience of 3-5 years is demanded in the case of key-punch operators. We have come across instances where East Indian women have been hired as keypunch operators if they would agree to work for no wages for the first month, only to be dismissed in the third or fourth month-- a case of *bought* Canadian experience which has no marketable value! The unscrupulous employer has at his or her disposal a pool of immigrant workers willing to buy Canadian experience. Women who have been so

grossly exploited dare not take any action against the employers since this would mean the loss of the only Canadian work reference they have.

It must be noted that lack of Canadian experience was less of a problem in securing certain kinds of jobs. For example, the employers of factory work seldom asked for Canadian experience.

SOME THOUGHTS

It appears that there is a division of labour in Canadian society based on gender and nationality. For the non-white immigrants, the issue of national origin remains important throughout their life. Employed women in our sample are over-represented in occupations with high and low status. The categories of sales and services have only 6% of the employed East Indian women. One must note that these fields are traditionally female. What is more interesting is the large number of educated East Indian women in natural sciences-- a non-traditional field of work for women in Canada.

However, it appears that more and more East Indian women are moving into clerical fields and less and less of them hoped to enter professional occupations. This not only reflects the scarcity of professional jobs nowadays, but also represents an initial move on the part of new immigrants to try to get *any* available job. They cannot stay out of the labour force for long.

For new immigrants with no clear idea of where to

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get jobs, the most prevalent information source is the network of family and friends already settled in Canada. This leads to entrenchment in specific jobs, a process furthered by the Canada Manpower services which channel women into clerical or factory jobs. Women with some university education succeeded in obtaining a clerk typist course; and women who were not highly educated and who were not fluent in English were channelled into industrial power sewing-machine operator courses. Women were rarely given a chance to train as skilled industrial workers or computer programmers.

It is crucial for East Indian women to change their employment hopes in line with the trends of the labour market. The startling fact is that only one-third of the women trained in accounting/bookkeeping were employed, and many of them were hired to do factory work! There is a definite need for responsible counselling in employment and education--a gap in service that is not met by many vocational counselling services.

A full report on the employment status of East Indian women in Toronto is available from the Indian Immigrant Aid Services, 9 Boon Avenue, Toronto, Ontario.



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On the Firing Line



Saigon Gold In Canada

Gold, Gold, nothing but Gold spurred the first Asians to Canada and the Fraser Valley from San Francisco in 1858. Those were the days when fortunes could be made by hard work, patience, and thrift in the worn-out placer mines. But the big bucks never came; only work as house boys, washers of dirty shirts, and stove side cooks--the lowest rung of the ladder of menial labour in outlaw Canada.

The Japanese went in big for fishing, gardening--- good hard labour. Protestants would be pleased to see their work ethic adopted by Asians-- only to make it in Slocan City, Greenwood, and Kaslo.

The South Asians too saw traps laid because of

their curry, saris, and turbans.

But some made it: Asians in high places-- radio, television, finance, culture, and even politics. That meant recognition and gold-filled teeth.

But does it? History doesn't lie. It tells how things were. It builds a base for what is now and what will come.

.....

You've weathered the South China storms on your Taiwan-chartered ships sometimes laden with gold flakes but mostly with just the clothes on your backs and a hope for better life in White Canada.

The first Vietnamese arrived in Canada wanting education. And finding stability from the wars in Indochina, they stayed. Now the politics of the interior have driven you out into a land with built-in structures that may force you, in time, to reconsider your move.

Canada will treat you well only if you work hard, don't climb too fast, pay your taxes, and shut your mouth when White Canadians call you ex-drug pushers, ex-addicts, and ex-whores.

In the Chinatowns, you can try to blend in with refugees from Taiwan, China, and Hong Kong. But you will be accused of perpetuating an inward-looking ghetto life.

White Canadians will tell you how lucky you are to be the select few to taste Western freedom and democracy. It *will* be a better life-- more fast cars, more fast food, and more time to reflect. You won't be shell-shocked with the gun-fire of socialist propaganda, but something more sinister, more mind crushing will sap your energy.

Canada is in a crisis. The Quebecois want their dignity after 300 years of struggle. Their fight has kindled a flame in the hearts of Asians in Canada who now want their dignity restored after 150 years of protracted struggle.

It is no longer life when your culture is eroded by assimilation, amalgamation, or pluralism under the spectre of multiculturalism.

With the high rate of interracial marriage, the Japanese in Canada are speedily embracing linguistic and cultural suicide as an unique entity with a particular sensibility.

What is in store is not simply relief from war and want, but also relief from your own identity and dignity as Vietnamese people. It won't come now, but in the faces of your children and their North American ways and accents.

Welcome to Canada.

by Nguyen Diem Cha

BUT, DO YOU HAVE CANADIAN EXPERIENCE?

By
W.M. Lee



The Chinese workers' movement in Canada presents an interesting and, in many ways, unique case study of labour history. The peculiar economic and social factors which have conditioned its development have rarely been investigated before.

According to more definitive historical records, Chinese workers arrived at the North West Coast of America as early as the last quarter of the eighteenth century. In January, 1788, Captain John Meares and William Douglas brought fifty Chinese artisan men and sailors with them from China to Nootka Sound, then vaguely termed as the North West Coast of America. G.P.V. Akrigg claimed that these Chinese workers were "the first Oriental labourers to be imported into British Columbia". The Chinese carpenters built a two-storey house and the first sea-voyage ship in the North West America Coast, a 40-ton schooner called *North West America*. The master of the vessel, Robert Funter, even employed a Chinese carpenter and two Chinese Mariners aboard to form a crew to trade along the coast.

A year later, when John Meares completed another fur trade in Canton, China, two ships from the newly-formed Associated Merchants of London and India, the *Argonaut* and the *Princess Royal*, sailed for Nootka Sound. Aboard the ships were approximately 70 Chinese labourers who intended to migrate to America. These Chinese workers were employed to build a permanent trading post for the Associated Merchants at Nootka Sound. John Meares planned to set up a fur processing factory at Nootka Sound-- again employing a large number of Chinese as workers. Were it not for the Nootka Controversy, a war between the British merchants and the Spaniards, this plan would probably have been carried out. In 1789, the Spaniards took over Nootka Sound, and the British handed over control of the post to the Spaniards. Some of the Chinese labourers were put to work in mining by the new authority, while the

sailors were sent back to China by the American vessel *Columbia*.

Significantly, the motivation of John Meares to import Chinese labour to work at Nootka Sound was exhibited almost one hundred years later by Andrew Onderdonk, the constructor of the far west section of the Canadian Pacific Railroad. In his diary, Meares wrote:

The Chinese were shipped as an experiment; they have been generally esteemed as hardy, and industrious, as well as ingenious race of people. They live on fish and rice and requiring low wages, it was a matter also of economical consideration to employ them; and during the whole of the voyage there was every reason to be satisfied with their service. If hereafter trading posts should be established on the American coast, a colony of these men would be a very important acquisition.

In June, 1882, Onderdonk wrote to Prime Minister John A. MacDonald explaining why he imported thousands of Chinese labourers for the railroad construction. In part, he wrote:

Looking ahead still further, I believe, that after the railway is completed, the 6,000 Chinese we import should not be discouraged

from remaining in the province. A country like British Columbia can be most profitably and successfully developed by a cheap class labour.

Both John Meares and Onderdonk's remarks clearly indicated their exploitive intent. On one hand they set an example for later employers in recruiting Chinese labourers; and, on the other hand, their remarks were widely used or quoted by people who were against Chinese workers.

The first large group of Chinese who entered New Caledonia were gold miners from California. In mid-May, 1858, the *San Francisco Globe* reported that the Chinese in that city had sent a reconnoitre called Ah Fong to New Caledonia to confirm the discovery of gold in the lower Fraser area. His return to San Francisco with a positive confirmation triggered a flow of Chinese miners who intended to seek their fortune by migrating north.

Within a year of this rush to the wilderness of British Columbia by Chinese from California, others began migrating directly from adversity-stricken China. On May 23, 1859, the *British Colonists* reported that "we hear that a large number of Chinamen are on their way to this country from China". Not only did the stories of gold attract the Chinese, but the political and economic atmospheres in China added extra pressure to the exodus. The colonialists of the imperialist countries, while denouncing the slavery system after it had fulfilled its role, yet having realized that "the time had (now) come for yellow to take the place of black at the behest of anti-slavery sentiment", had started another entrepreneurial experiment called the "Chinese coolie trade". Prior to their arrival in British Columbia, hundreds of thousands of Chinese labourers were decoyed at home. In 1859, an emigration house was opened in Canton, Kwongtung, by British officials to control the coolie trade systematically. It was hoped that the new system "will prove so much cheaper than that of men-stealing" and that labour contractors who did not adopt the system "from motives of morality will do so with a view to economy". Since the 1860's, not only did the Imperial Chinese government accede to the contract-labour system, she also took it as a means to relieve the government from the pressure of political struggle among the unsatisfied peasants of south China.

In the summer of 1860, it was reported that Chinese arrived at Victoria, B.C. at the rate of 500 per week. Indeed, the population of the Chinese miners in certain mining camps was higher than their white counterparts. The *British Colonist* immediately responded by saying that "at the present rate in which the Asians are flocking to the mining districts, it will not be long before the miners of British Columbia number in proportion of one European or American to ten Chinamen."

Before the so-called first collapse of this great gold mining venture of the Colony, Chinese labourers had already been heading towards other fields of industry, however primitive, in British Columbia. It was during the long depression between the late 1860's and 1870's that Chinese workers pioneered such important industries in the canneries, lumbering, and market gardening. In the summer of 1864, two hundred Chinese, together with 100 white workers, were employed to construct a wagon road from Quesnel mouth to Cottonwood. Next year, when Edgar Dewdney was commissioned to build a trail from Hope-Princeton to Wild Horse Creek, Chinese labourers were again employed. Another five hundred Chinese labourers were working on the construction of the first cable tower line in the Colony at the same time. The discovery of copper at Dewdney Trail, B.C.,



also provided the newly-arrived labourers with jobs. As in all subsequent periods of economic depression, salient anti-Chinese commotion became crystalized during this recession period.

Plagued by the shortage of unskilled labour and endangered by malaria, Chinese labourers were hired to reclaim the swamp land of the lower Fraser area. The Chinese were immune to sickle cell anemia, which was detrimental to both white workers and native Indians.

With the depletion of new gold finds, some Chinese fell back on their agricultural roots to start a market gardening industry in the mid 1860's. Until large in-

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dustrial farms appeared in B.C., Chinese market gardening was the main source of supply of vegetables to the local residents. Unlike most farm owners in the latter stage who had sufficient resources to hire extra manpower, the Chinese market gardener was a self-employed gardener-labourer. To begin with, many Chinese miners cultivated vegetables beside their claims. They found out later that there was a market for the surplus from their cultivation and, thence, started market gardening full-time.

Although there is no definite record of the first Chinese employed in coal mining in B.C., it was reported that Chinese were about to be put to work in the coal fields of Nanaimo owned by the Dunsmuir empire in 1867. In September, 1876, a gas explosion occurred in the Fitzwilliam Mine of the Vancouver Coal Company at New Castle Island. One Chinese labourer was noted on the casualty list and another was seriously wounded. Judging from this evidence, there is no doubt that Chinese labourers must have been working in the coal mining industry prior to this date. There is also evidence showing that Chinese workers were employed as loggers by the Victoria Lumber and Manufacturing Company which was established in 1862.

By the late 1870's, Chinese workers had already reached out to various industries. During the enquiry session of the 1879 Select Committee on Chinese Labour and Immigration, the Chairman of the Committee, Amor De Cosmos, presented a statistical report on the Chinese population and their occupational distribution in British Columbia as follows:

Occupation	Number of Chinese Engaged
Domestic servant	300
Shoemaker	150
Laundryman	300
Tailor	100
General Labourer	700
Gold Miner	1800
Peddler	50
Gardener and Farm Hand	1500
Fisheries Industry	1100

The rounding-off of the above figures makes one feel cautious to take the statistics for granted. However, the records of the 1884 Royal Commission on Chinese Immigration indicate that the majority of those who had testified agreed that most of the Chinese in British Columbia were labourers. But the best statistical source of information can be drawn from the 1923 edition of the Canada Year Book. It tabled the number of Chinese who entered Canada from 1886-1923, the number of Chinese labourers who paid the capitation tax, and the number of Chinese exempted from paying the tax. It was recorded that, within that period, 81,744 Chinese had paid the head tax of fifty, one hundred or five hundred dollars, depending upon what year they entered the country, while 7,908 Chinese students, merchants, ministers and diplomats were exempted from paying the head tax. It was calculated that 8.82% of the total arrivals admitted were exempt from paying the capitation tax. Therefore, over 90% of the Chinese who migrated to Canada before the pre-exclusion period were workers.

While Chinese labourers were able to establish themselves mainly as unskilled labourers in various industries, anti-Chinese agitation was also moving into deeper waters. It was said that the animosity against the Chinese began in 1865 by "some few intelligent men of the middle class." This new sentiment was observed

both in the West and eastern Canada. In the last session of the Colonial Legislative Council of British Columbia, Arthur Bunster proposed an annual fifty dollar poll tax on all Chinese in the Colony, irrespective of their occupations. The proposal was defeated. On 27th March, 1871, several organized workers' groups met in Toronto. Jas. Dean of the Knights of St. Crispin read a circular received from San Francisco bearing on the Chinese labour problem indicating that anti-Chinese sentiment had already attracted the attention of organized labourers in the East, although at the moment there were few Chinese in Toronto.

In the first provincial Legislative Assembly of British Columbia in 1872, John Robson again moved that "effectual measures be adopted for the purpose of preventing the employment of Chinese labour upon the public work of this province, or upon any federal works." He also repeated the motion, proposed by Arthur Bunster, of the fifty dollars poll tax. He claimed that Chinese labourers were competing with white workers in the Vancouver Island coal mines. What Robson tried to achieve can be understood in a remark from an earlier edition of the *New Westminster Times*. It said "we are glad to perceive the action taken by the municipal council with regard to employing civilized labour on all works contracted for in connection with the municipal body". Though John Robson's proposal was defeated in 1872, the basic principles of the bill were brought forth again and again in the British Columbia Legislative Assembly for many years. Three years later, in 1875, a similar bill was carried with a marginal vote in the City Council of Victoria. Noah Shakespeare proposed that instruction be given to "the city surveyor to insert in all specifications and contracts, a clause to the effect that no Chinese labour shall be used on any labour for the City Council or the city water works".

In mid-1873, the first anti-Chinese group in Canada was established in Victoria. At its inaugural meeting, the Anti-Chinese Society passed a resolution demanding that the Dominion government petition the British government to revise the Treaty of the Convention of Peking. Their aim was the abolition of protection under the treaty for the Chinese. The local media were all too happy to promote the anti-Chinese sentiment. In a long editorial, the *British Colonist* lamented, "it is now considerably more than a twelve month since we endeavored to impress the reader and legislator with the duty of guarding the labour interests against the intrusion of this race (Chinese)".

Anti-Chinese labour feeling was brought to a head among the British Columbian white working class in the second half of the 1870's as they lived through the adversity of the depression between 1875 and 1880. Politicians and publicists took this opportunity to secure their votes or interests by adding more anti-Chinese sentiment. In March, 1878, Arthur Bunster ridiculed himself before the more sophisticated politicians of the East by moving the following resolution in the House of Commons:

"That the Government insert a clause in each and every contract let for the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railroad, that no man wearing his hair longer than five and one-half inches shall be deemed eligible for employment on said work, and that no person wearing his hair longer shall be eligible to any contract on said railroad, any one offended the clause would be fined or imprisoned."

Other members of Parliament were either humoured enough not to take Bunster's resolution seriously or they were too occupied by the threat of annexation of British Columbia to the United States. The construction of a railway from coast to coast was not only a dream but, also, a must, in order to secure the Pacific province in Confederation. The huge capital required for construction was still at stake at the time. How to achieve the "national dream" with a tight budget was the main concern of the politicians in the East. Cheap labour was considered to be one of the prime solutions. Bunster's intention to exclude Chinese labour at an inopportune moment would obviously break the national dream. Some politicians agreed with Bunster that the Chinese were not desirable but defeated the resolution on the grounds that without Chinese labour it would impede the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railroad.

The rout of Bunster's motion in the House of Commons soon found compensation at the provincial level. In September, 1878, the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia passed two discriminatory acts against the Chinese. One was to prohibit the employment of Chinese in provincial public works. The other was the Chinese Tax Bill. Every Chinese over twelve years of age was thenceforth, required to apply for a licence for every three months of employment, for a fee of ten dollars. Under the regulations of the Bill, all merchants, farmers, traders or employers of Chinese workers had to furnish the tax collector with a list of all Chinese workers under his employment. One hundred dollars fine per every Chinese employed was set for any defiance of the law.

The Chinese community reacted tactically to the Acts. A community-wide strike was staged in Victoria, beginning on the 17th September, 1878. The Chinese workers in the boot and shoe factories put down their tools; cooks at the hotels and laundry workers at the laundry houses walked out for five days. The provincial government was under great pressure to back down and Chinese workers finally won their demands to ban the Acts. On 27th September 1878, Judge John Hamilton Gray announced the acts were unconstitutional. It was through this solidarity of the working class that a general organization amongst the Chinese workers was observed on the grounds that white workers "intended to drive the Chinese from the country".

In the same month of 1878, the Workingman's Protective Association was formed in Victoria, British Columbia. The main objective of the Association was to tender its members with "mutual protection of the working class of British Columbia against the great influx of Chinese" and "to use all legitimate means for the suppression of their immigration". Protectionism had hampered the class consciousness of the white working class and they learned little from the Chinese general strike at Victoria. One week after the strike, the Association compiled a list of people who employed Chinese workers and presented the list at its meeting. At the end of the year, the Workingman's Protective Association again assembled a petition and was able to collect approximately 1,500 signatures, demanding the pro-

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hibition of Chinese immigration. During the next session of the House of Commons, Amor De Cosmos, M.P. for Victoria, B.C., using the petition as an instrument, pushed the Dominion government to appoint a select committee, in which De Cosmos was the chairperson. On 14 May, 1879, the Select Committee on Chinese Labour and Immigration presented its report with the following three, among three other recommendations:

- i) To pass a measure similar to that of Queensland; placing restrictions upon the further immigration of Chinese.
- ii) In the construction of the Inter-Colonial Railway, i.e. the Canadian Pacific Railroad, Chinese labour may be prohibited.
- iii) The Act of British Columbia imposing a heavy tax on Chinese, should be passed.

As the MacDonald government was eager to lift the long agony of British Columbians on the Canadian Pacific Railroad, the politicians in eastern Canada were reluctant to entertain the Committee's recommendations. They rationalized that, in order to make their dream a reality, Chinese railroad navvies were a neces-

sity. The report of the Select Committee was disapproved as "the result of long engendered prejudice."

The British Columbians held a completely different point of view. On 20th March 1879, a mass meeting was organized by the Workingmen's Protective Association at New Westminster. The meeting hall was decorated with placards bearing catchwords such as "Chinese Competition Unequal, Immoral and Vicious". A People's Reform Party was established as a result of the meeting and was destined to "organize the people of this province for self-protection against enemies to the well-being of the Province". One local Chinese resident who tried to present himself was expelled from the meeting.

In May 1879, the House of Commons continued to debate the Canadian Pacific Railroad and the Chinese labour question. All the British Columbian members of Parliament threatened their counterparts in the East with secession from Confederation if the Chinese did not go. This idea was not felt without reverberations in the East. In an earlier edition, the *Montreal Post* said "... the peaceable withdrawal of British Columbia from the Confederation ... would have been the easiest way of settling a series of vexed questions. We would get out of the huge folly, the Pacific Railway, while the British Columbians could do as they please with the Chinese question."

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Before the government called for tenders for the construction of the western section of the Canadian Pacific Railroad in October, the local newspapers had already wooed the people with the idea that it would be in the interests of the province to give up the railroad rather than introduce more Chinese labourers. On 10th May, 1879, the *Mainland Guardian* published a long editorial-- "The Chinese Question". It proclaimed that

"... it is a most important point whether it would not be even better for the province to forego any advantage from the introduction of the railway than for it to be the work of Chinese labour, flooding the country with that class of people."

Like the *Victoria Gazette*, the New Westminster newspaper was better at giving prophecies than in analyzing social phenomena. The same editorial concluded with the following statement:

"We regard this matter of Chinese labour on our railway as the turning point of our history, and that our future for weal or for woe largely depends upon it."

The attitude of the *Mainland Guardian* towards the Canadian Pacific Railroad and the Chinese labour problem was not an instant thought. It reflected prevalent mental attitudes in all of British Columbia. On 27th October 1879, Noah Shakespeare stated in a Workingmen's Protective Association meeting that he would "rather vote against the transcontinental railway than see Chinese employed upon it." In the 22nd Annual Convention

of the Trade and Labour Congress of Canada, the following remark was recorded:

"Canada wants a nation of white men, even if it has to exercise self-denial and experience some temporary loss to ensure this."

The Convention strongly protested the importation of Hindu labourers to work in the saw mills as "pressure is being brought to bear to allow Chinese labour to come in for railway work." The Labour Council of Moose Jaw, Sask., agreed that "it is better for railway development to proceed slowly and maintain the present condition to the labour classes of our country, than to bring in 5,000 Chinese labourers and reduce the wages of the classes who are to be part of the permanent residents of our Dominion". In September 1909, the Vancouver Trades and Labour Council used similar tactics to oppose Asian immigration. In a telegram to the Prime Minister, the council stated, "better no *Grand Trunk Pacific* than to add to the huge non-voting Oriental population which already controls the fishing and lumbering resources of the province...".

Soon after Andrew Onderdonk, the contractor for the section of the Canadian Pacific Railroad from Port Moody to Kamloops Lake, British Columbia, arrived at Victoria in mid-April, the Anti-Chinese Association acted at once to ensure that no Chinese would be employed. However, Onderdonk's answer simply indicated that it would be impossible for him not to consider the employment of the Chinese navvies. For he said that "with reluctance" he would "employ Indians and Chinese after all white labourers were recruited."

And the building of the Canadian Pacific Railroad is another story ...

This is an excerpt from a larger study of the history of Chinese workers in Canada.

Pen-and-ink drawings by Hing Mak. Hing Mak is a sculptor and painter in Toronto. He is presently working on a series of oil paintings depicting the Chinese experience in Canada.



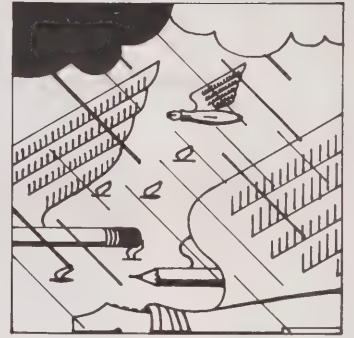
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Poetry



ME

My black hair is a dark beast's mane
framing a face etched in rain
(I defy your expectation
No, not pain,
yes, rain)
it washes away the expressions:
Aha! She's Asian!

The sleek straight hair
that forms in a top bun
or cascades down to a round brown bum
Ha, ha, the Oriental!
and the mind clicks in all
the notions of orientalese
(like some disease)
so very pleased
to be comfortable

Yes, rain, I've seen, it falls
no matter on whose hair
without explanation
of its descent and acute accent.

Lakshmi Gill

You birds
who dip and circle
high
between the freeways
lithe gliders
on a soot coral
sky
what do you covet
in the cloverleaves below
and stalk
with such urban skill
what
enticing enough
to tie you here
in this piece of sky
spirits
in rein?

Carol Matsui

MUTE'S SONG

Moon's voice is silent
above the factory
moon's voice is muted
for years, looking upwards
below, the moon prefers quiet
like a worshipper--Let all
the world keep silence before her

A reactionary moon though
watching the workers from one day
to the next
bending under the burden
of overwork
tired at nights
children restless too

Ask the moon for respite; she's still
silent, composed in her visage--
a glow, sometimes warm and understanding
with orange face, vermilion hue--
the moon regrets she can't do anything else--
only glow

and the factory hums
the men wind towards it, they come home
weary in the evening
I walk past the high bridge, sometimes I
stand there looking at the distant face
of the moon, wondering, What does she think?

Cyril Dabydeen



CHILDREN

Children are a blessing
to parents who raise them
right
All it takes is a lot of
love and attention and
understanding to show them
the light.

What responsibility is
to one another begins in
the home
And respect each others
rights.

No one is born bad.
All they need is to be
taught what's wrong or
right.

As today's children will
be the generation of tomorrow
So think upon these things
For everyone has a moral.

Whoever said spare the
rod and spoil the child
There's more to that
which comes to mind.

More or less of the ruler or strap could be the cause of the generation gap.

What parents and children
need is to have more
patience and true
understanding of one
another's feelings.

If children are
taught to love and respect others,
they get that in return
What one gives out
must come back.

For we will know
the results one day
When our children
come our way
to show their love
and respect for us
in return
Are the rewards
of our efforts.

R. CHAN

R. Chan lives in Victoria, B.C. and was recently in New York attending the birth of her fourth grandson.

WHAT HE SAID

He said--
the immigrant mustn't complain
he must accept things as they are
Why shouldn't he? After all, we're being kind--
we're being tolerant.

Send him back
to where he came from
if he dares to disagree
if he dares to assert himself
like the rest of us.

Will he integrate? Why shouldn't he?
Watch him become stultified
his identity swallowed up, then he'll
truly become one of us--
the terrible mediocrity of the rest.

Maybe if he wishes to court your daughter
wishes to marry her, eat with you,
pray with you, then you'll begin to have doubts,
maybe he really wishes to integrate
maybe you are scared he'll make you different.

Cyril Dabydeen



HIGH PLACES

The solitary sparrow on the lonely pine
Atop the jagged hilltop, singing alone,
Uncertain, certainly uncaring of audience.
The eye of determination loosed to quiver
Thin needles by such slight song.

On adjacent mesas lies
The single foe of solitude,
Whose art of distilled listening
Is purposed to further the aims
Of advancement, and adversary relations

Are seemly for the critical mass
That gathers round the Venus mound
For rites of passage towards an exit,
An evening at a tithe of this day's wages;
Eyes that stare and do not see,

That twitch not by reaction but impulse.
Not all gather for the canonical display
Of clad splendor and politics in the wings;
Those missed by absence, alternate foci
Of entertainment, by gossip and rich slander.

The song of the solitary only the mark of anger
To those together listening to the feathered patriarch;
And cultured anger the boorish display
Of remarks sharpened to an anecdote
Of sharp stones waiting to be hurled.

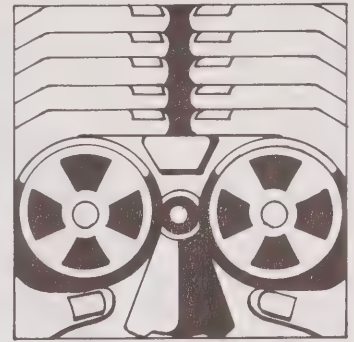
Only sparrows on lonely pines trace
Clear targets without clutter by isolation.
And the songs of sweetness and light are irritants
To those who dream the strong cauchemars
Of high places, as ruling roosts and feasts.

While the new year is young the songster
Accomplishes most since his lines are loose;
His ideas hang together by parenthetical
Displays of madness diagnosed from afar,
Through fears of analogy and farrowed likeness.

Roland M. Kawano



Face to Face



ANU BOSE: *Industrial Organizer for the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union*

"Most of my life in Canada, I have been in the workforce. I took a degree in linguistics in the U.S., obtained an ESL teaching certificate in Canada, but nothing I have studied relates to what I am doing now.

In December 1977 I became an industrial organizer for the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union in Toronto. I have a better perspective on class, race and sexism since I started this work. Immigrant women workers occupy the lowest rungs in the garment industry -- Greek, Italian, Chinese, Portugese-- with East Indians and Koreans being the most recent arrivals. The women are mostly sewing machine operators; the work is mostly piecework. It is production-oriented and there is much pressure. Piecework -- sewing left sleeves or right pockets all day -- leads to feelings of alienation and results in the de-skilling of the workers. Most of these women of course, hold two jobs-- housework, care of children, cooking, all of that as well.

The way the women will achieve job equality is through the labour movement. For instance, if women are to become cutters (cutting is considered a craft and is well-paid and most cutters are men) in the garment trade, it has to come about through the policies of the unions. They have to negotiate clauses in their collective agreement, such as posting of jobs. This will allow women to break out of the job ghettos.

Less than a third of the garment workers are represented in the unions. There is fear of the unions. The women work in close proximity with their bosses--in small shops. They are handicapped by lack of language and ignorance of labour laws. There is so much harm an employer can do through duress. The foreladies are drawn from the ranks of garment workers and they are

effective tools in the hands of the management. If the forelady is a good Italian woman, for instance, most Italian women will not want to sign a union card for fear of being personally disloyal to this woman. Immigrant husbands, who are themselves union members, discourage their wives' involvement in unions. They are afraid of independent political action on the part of their wives.

There are very few immigrant organizers. It is a back-breaking job. Since law discourages union activity at the work place, we go to their homes at night. More money, benefits, job security are all arguments we use to persuade women. An important development in the union at this time is the set-up of a task force on English in the work place and one on health and safety in the garment industry. Once you have got a place certified and you have achieved a contract -- a collective agreement -- you feel rewarded."

MANGAL SINGH: *Security Guard and Crossing Guard*

"I work as a security guard Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from 8 p.m. to 5 a.m. On weekdays I work as a school crossing guard mornings and afternoons.

I don't know what it feels like to be tired. I have always worked-- since I was sixteen -- first as a farmer, then in the military and until retirement, in the police force in India.

The first month I was in Canada I spent hundreds of dollars on bus fares going to factories looking for work. People looking at my turban, my beard and age refused to consider me for any work. I saw an ad for a school crossing guard and went to the police headquarters for an interview. They were quite impressed with my military and police work experience in India. At that time, there were no Sikh crossing guards in Toronto. They gave me a hat to wear. I told them that I can't wear a hat. I have my turban. They said "no hat, no job." I decided to take the hat with me. I still have the hat but I go to work in my turban. I have been a crossing guard at the same crossing for three years. I take the children across with great care and affection. They are all fond of me and greet me happily: "Good morning, sir."

I work as a security guard for apartment buildings in downtown Toronto. I get just about the minimum wage and no benefits. There are other security firms that pay better, but they will not hire someone like me. Just a couple of months ago, a large security firm told me that they will not hire a Sikh. I told them of the recent Human Rights case decision and told them they were not minding the law. They said that I might get the job if I complain, but I won't last long and will leave with a spoilt work record. I could not argue any further.



Anu Bose



Mangal Singh

I have a wife and two children to support. My daughter left school to work as a presser. I could do with a full-time job that pays better.

I will go back to India after my children are settled. I will build a farm for them for when they return. There will be something -- some family property for them, there."

KRISHNA CHAWLA: Astrologer/Palmist

"Destiny is more important than action. What is the motivator of action? Motivation comes from your stars -- the configuration of planets at the time of birth. Astrology is a science. I am a professional astrologer.

There is a basic astrological consultation--casting of a chart predicting what comes in the next year. Then, there is a more comprehensive report -- typewritten and detailed -- a natal chart, horoscopes, and comparison charts indicating potential for living, turning points in life, feasibility of marital and other relationships, business partnerships.....at given points in time, well into the future. Palmistry is more personality oriented -- a palm can reveal a person's strengths and weaknesses in health, job, love life, name/fame, foreign travel, sex life, children....I also do tarot cards, numerology and bio-rhythm charts. In terms of frequency of demand, tarot cards rate high-- a quick reading of the immediate future. Some want everything--"the works". The prices range from \$6 for tarot cards to \$40-80 range for astrological charts.

80% of my clients are ladies. Ladies are interested in love problems and men are worried about money/ ca-



Krishna Chawla

reer. 60% of my clients are European-- Scottish, Irish, Yugoslavian, Finnish, English. Very few Italians; very few Chinese. 10% are Indians-- mostly from Trinidad and Africa. Indians don't like to pay for a horoscope when they can get one for ten rupees from India.

My clients are working people, middle class and are in the 25-40 age group. The young have an interest but not enough money. I am stiff about my prices. When people have to pay for something, they take it more seriously. The really depressed people --those on welfare, the unemployed-- can benefit from astrology. They can learn of their potential and their limitations. If astrology is covered by OHIP, they can be helped.

My job starts at 12 noon and goes on well into the late hours. Demand for my services is linked with the general activity level. In summer, people are making plans, are more active and I am very busy. Astrology parties are popular around Christmas, mostly with the ladies' groups. In the depressing months of January, February and March people would rather go to a psychiatrist. They are covered by OHIP, you see.

My clients are happy. They come again and again. And they bring daughters, sisters and other family members. A large number are good friends and steady clients -- and I know their lifestyles and families. Job satisfaction is definitely there. I cannot work under anybody. A 9-5 job does not appeal to me.

No discrimination in this job. I get more love and respect than most other Indians do. When people look in the Yellow Pages and see 'Krishna' among 25 other astrologers, they call me. My accent on the phone is purely Indian. I am not rich; just making a reasonable living."

KHIM TAN: Government Consultant

When I was 27 in 1972, I emigrated to Canada from Singapore by way of Australia, getting a B.S. in Economics and an M.A. in Political Economy at the University of Melbourne. During my pre-emigration embassy interview, I was warned that I shouldn't have high expectations about pursuing my professional career, as Canada has a serious unemployment situation. However, that didn't deter me as I was as yet not interested in pursuing a career.

My first job, as a Simpsons salesman, lasted five weeks. Thereafter, I worked as an assesment officer. Then I finally located my present position as a consultant for the Ontario Ministry of Culture and Recreation.

Unemployment has always been a fact of life here because of the peculiar nature of the Canadian economy. Although the country has great natural wealth, it has never fully developed economically due to the size of its population. It's unfair, but immigration policy of this country is basically determined by what the government perceived as its national interest. It's partly tinged by economic considerations and partly by humanitarian reasons when the occasion demands. Canada's selective immigration policy accepts people with education and professional skills and rejects those that the government feels cannot easily integrate into Canadian society.

Quite a few immigrants are underemployed. Racism is a fact of life here. Society has got to go a long way before the goal of equal opportunity is realized -- especially if you're a member of the visible minority group. Being a member of that group means you have to strive harder and it may be sometime before your career goals are achieved.

As a consultant I'm responsible for developing programmes to promote intercultural and intergroup harmony and understanding in Ontario. Yes, I am frustrated because of the challenges I'm constantly faced with. I would like to see a more equitable society with equal opportunity for all, but the only way to correct the situation is for more immigrants to take an active interest in politics. The mainstream society likes minority groups that know their place; unfortunately, too many minority groups are keeping to their 'place'. What happens is that these groups tend to isolate themselves from the corridors of power, not fully participating in the political process. The battle for a more equitable society demands social involvement on the part of all its constituent members. To remove oneself from the political process is to hinder one's progress.



Khim Tan

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SUMIKO HAKIDA: House Cleaner

"I guess I've been working since the age of six. When I was a little girl on my father's berry farm in Langley, B.C. I worked 12 hours a day -- hoeing, picking berries and clearing land. I thought I was going to be a farmer for the rest of my life. Then the evacuation came and my world was drastically changed. After the war we were left with absolutely nothing. The government had confiscated all our property and resold it for peanuts. My father only received about 500 dollars for his 80 acres of land. We had nothing to go back to, so we were herded out east.

"I was 21 years old when I came by myself to Toronto in 1945. I remember being dumped like an old crate at the Weston train station, without any money in my pockets -- without knowing where I was supposed to go. Finally, I was picked up by a nice English lady that the B.C. Security Commission had arranged for me to work for as a housekeeper. Like all other Japanese Canadians who came to Toronto after the war, I worked like a slave -- cooking; washing and ironing clothes; shovelling snow; scrubbing and waxing floors; dusting; polishing silverware; mowing the lawns; babysitting; waiting on guests at fancy cocktail parties -- everything for 90 dollars a month!

"Except for a couple of months when I worked at a toy factory on King Street making dolls, and when I took time off to give birth to my children, I've been cleaning houses in Forest Hill and other high class districts for over 30 years now. I don't like what I'm doing, but I'm used to it. I know I'm rather underpaid at three dollars per hour, but I don't have the courage to ask for a raise because the ladies I work for are so nice to me. I feel so lucky and grateful to be treated with respect, not like some cleaning women I know who are treated like dirt or like little girls who can be easily bribed with lollipops.

"My doctor tells me to find easier work because of my high blood pressure, but I would hate to change. What other kind of work could I get at my age? I would hate to work in an office, sitting at a desk all day. I like being active. At least with my kind of work I won't be forced to retire automatically as soon as I turn 65. As long as I can still see and walk and use my hands I'll be cleaning mansions. Anyway, things are a bit easier now since all the families have dishwashers and carpets in their kitchens and bathrooms -- and they hire young boys to shovel snow. The only thing that worries me is: how am I going to survive when I am too old to work? In my line of work there are no benefits when you retire...no security....no company pension plans."



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We're Just Children



HIMA: Spice Store Helper, 14 years old.

I work full-time during the summer, both March and Winter holidays and occasionally during the school term as a cashier in our spice store. We have in the store all the spices in the world: various kinds of beans, rice, flours, Indian foods, Mexican foods, middle-eastern foods, and some health foods.

When I was younger and we lived above the store, I used to take charge of the store when my mother was upstairs. I liked to fiddle around with the buttons on the cash register and help my mother pack spices. Now, I work as a cashier and help people with ideas about use of spices in different recipes. A lot of this, I picked up listening to my mother talk to customers. It is fun to work in the store and you meet a lot of people.

I get about \$40 a week when I work full-time. I usually save it. My parents like me to save the money for university education. They usually get me whatever I need. I have my own bank account and I have saved about \$1,000.

I don't really want to run a store or be a cashier when I grow up.



Hima

TIM CHOW: Grocery Store Helper, 14 years old.

I've been working here at my dad's supermarket for three years since I was 11 years old. Do you want to know how I started? One day we were driving back from church and my dad asked me if I wanted to work and he gave a week for me to decide.

I work Tuesdays and Thursdays after school and all day Saturdays. In the summer, I work every day except Wednesdays for 5 hours and all day Saturdays.

I put cans on the shelf. After closing I sweep the floor and put the vegetables away. I tidy up the shelves, and dust them. Sometimes, when there is lots of people, I help up at the front -- help put groceries in a bag, or carry it out to the car. Sometimes I use the cash register.

Sometimes I feel like working really hard. Sometimes I get bored of it. Sometimes I go home late and have to eat or I'll be tired and I say to myself I'll get up early in the morning to do my homework.

The best part of working is money; I give my mom part of my pay, and the rest I spend or save. This winter I bought some downhill skis and a savings bond. If I weren't saving up for university, I'd take a trip with my mom.



Tim Chow

FRANCES CHOW: Grocery Store Helper, 13 years old.

I've worked at my dad's store around 8 months. Before that, I did a paper route for the *Toronto Star* for 3 years. I had around 43 customers a day and 65 on Saturday. My dad thought the paper route was too hard, and I didn't get paid enough. So he asked me if I wanted to work at the store.

I work Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. I work on the cash register and put groceries on the shelf. Sometimes, I'd like to go places with my friends after school, but sometimes I don't have anything else to do and I need the money.

I don't want to give up my job because my brother and I wanted to save up for a swimming pool, but my dad wouldn't let us.

I like having Saturday off. I take care of my sister sometimes-- she is four-- and I have piano lessons. I buy my own clothes and school supplies; I go places-- roller skating and movies. And I don't have to ask my parents for lunch money.



Frances Chow

BOBBY CHONG: Paper Boy, 11 years old.

I am 11 years old and I have had this paper route now for 7 months. Before this one, I delivered the morning paper but it was hard for me to get up in the early mornings and deliver them before school. Some days I would get up so late that my mother ended up delivering them as I had to go to school. She made me quit that route.

Before that route, though, I helped a friend with his route and he sort of trained me. We shared a large route of over 80 papers.

There are a lot of things I don't like about delivering papers: it is hard work and I get tired pulling the cart through the snow in the winter. And a lot of people are never home when you have to collect the money and you have to go back a few times before you can get it. And the Saturday papers are so heavy and big, it takes me longer to deliver them because I have to make two trips -- I can't put them all into my cart for one trip.

The money isn't too bad, but if I could get another kind of job, I would-- but I can't because of my age. I get paid for each newspaper I deliver on a weekly rate. I'm allowed to spend half of it and I put the rest in a bank account. I bought a 10 speed bike last summer but I'm supposed to save for the future. I spend some of my money on books too. I give my little brother some pay too when he helps me with Saturday papers. Last month my mother was in the hospital and I rented a TV for her room. She never watches it at home because she doesn't have time but she sure liked it in the hospital!

I read the paper everyday. I think it'd be fun to be a reporter and write all day but my dad wants me to be a doctor.

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Review

No Other Lodgings by Francis Itani. (Fredericton: Fiddlehead Poetry Books, 1978), 55 pp.

No Other Lodgings by Francis Itani is a fine collection of poems which delve into the subconsciousness of a people who were routed from their homes in the midst of wartime racist hysteria. Itani's poems derive their force not from polemics but from a quiet understatement of the grief, confusion and shock arising from the policies of evacuation and dispersal practised against the Japanese Canadians in British Columbia. The need to question and come to terms with a deep hurt is one that Itani understands well and her answer is to touch our nerve endings with images that spring from a collective inner psyche.

The poems are divided into three sections. The first section does not deal with the war experience. Instead Itani writes about Japan and successfully captures a vivid, palpable sense of the claustrophobia of an island culture. She writes: "Like heat-swollen flies/ we are webbed/ to this island/ until the boat returns." Images of heat and oppressiveness prevail in this section. The cramped living quarters with their paper-thin walls give rise to an unremitting consciousness of others and oneself: "between the two rooms and into this compartment/ the woman and I/ extend,/ each maintaining static awareness/ as the other's sound recedes/ better practise discretion than starkly face the yawning/ mouths of our lives." Itani has the ability to sketch mood powerfully in a few spartan lines. Even the rats and cockroaches that lurk in the dusky corners and crevices of the houses add to the sense of being enclosed and watched. It is an apt metaphor for life in the internment camps.

The second section, entitled *In The Camp*, deals with life in interior B. C. during the war. Itani writes of neighbours, death, hope and shattered dreams, for life goes on here even in the camp. The best poem in this section is *The Camp Revisited-- 1976* in which a young woman returns to one of the internment camps to find a part of herself left buried among the rubble of broken pottery and bulldozed houses. Surveying the remnants of those years of suffering and questioning which have seemingly been swallowed into the indifferent earth, she wonders, "But how shall I know which clump of earth is mine?" And when she finds the very spot where her house once stood she can claim: "This moment/ this unit of my universe/ this hole in the ground/ this is part of my tally/ I am a young woman buried here."

Among some of the other poems in this section, however, there are two which baffle me. In *The Children Take Voluminous Notes* she writes: "Today seventeen thousand coastal residents decided to move inland." Why she uses the word "decided" is a complete puzzle. Surely she must know that when the Japanese Canadians



moved inland it was certainly through no decision of their own but by government orders that no person of Japanese descent live within 100 miles of the coast. So why does Itani obscure this point and mislead the reader? Another poem, *1952*, reads: "We cannot ask / even of ourselves/ why this has come about." While it may be argued that Itani's poem attempts to capture and recreate the feelings of confusion and shame held by a large number of Japanese Canadians at the time of the evacuation, I personally find the fatalism and pessimism embodied in such philosophical stoicism an inaccurate picture of the times. It depicts a weak and frightened group of people, which no doubt is the way some did feel, but without any references in other poems to the resistance attempted and the anger felt by many, an unknowledgeable reader is left with a portrait that is false because it is incomplete.

Itani is at her best when she reaches beyond the psychological barriers we set up to enclose our sense of comfort and security and pulls out unspoken questions and doubts. In the third section, *Family*, she accomplishes this aim by contrasting life in the camp and before the internment with the present "good life" with all its material wealth and comfort. Memories float back to the simple joy of growing a really good ear of corn or the glowing pride felt when seeing one's son finally allowed to don a uniform. But what was lost somewhere in the hiatus between a bare, rugged fisherman's shack on the B.C. coast and a four-bedroom bungalow in Don Mills complete with all the trappings of a middle class lifestyle. The grief remains and

the question of loss still hangs over us.

Itani's poetry has succeeded in distilling the minds and hearts of a generation of suffering. Together with illustrations by Shizuye Takashima, this work is important as poetic journey into a chapter of our history that still holds so many questions for us today.

LYNNE KUTSUKAKE

A Dream of Riches: The Japanese Canadians, Tamio Wakayama (P.O. Box 69747, Station K, Vancouver V5K 4Y7: Japanese Centennial Project, 1978), 190 pp. \$13.00 paper.

"Why are the Japanese in Canada more assimilated and less visible than the Chinese?" Such a question has always perplexed me and I have never been able to give an adequate response from a Japanese perspective until now with *A Dream of Riches*. This book is a seldom told history of Canada's Japanese community which reveals the tragic and shameful treatment by the Canadian government of this minority group. Through words and pictures, it provides a social history of the Japanese experience in Canada and commemorates their centennial year in this country. Through the auspices of the Pacific Community Self-Development Society, the book is the combined effort of the Japanese Canadian Centennial Project group that has also put together a travelling exhibition of the photographs in the book.

The introduction sets the tone and hits home immediately. The intent of the authors is not to display remorse or animosity, but just to present the historical facts of the impact of certain government decrees on the lives of most Japanese in Canada -- facts that few non-Japanese Canadians of the last two generations know. The War Measures Act invoked in the name of national security resulted in the internment of all the Japanese in this country during World War II. The introduction also mentions the reluctance of many Japanese Canadian parents to teach their children about their heritage and to display pride in their identity because of the racial hatred they were subjected to. In order to survive, the Japanese were forced to minimize any differences by assimilating. Adopting a new culture in a threatening situation meant rejecting one's own thereby hopefully increasing the possibility of acceptance by the hostile white society.

Just as the grade six student wrote in an essay in 1921 in the text of the book:

We Japanese are now facing discrimination. How can we avoid it? We should not do what white people do not like. Before going to school we should wash our hands and faces as well... in school, we should listen to our teachers carefully and get higher marks than white children. Then white children and teachers will like us...

Despite these and other endeavours, the Japanese have perhaps been the worst treated. They were not given full citizenship status until 1949.

Also included as a part of the text are brief descriptions, accounts, vignettes and war images of personal experiences by people who documented them for community newsletters, newspapers, and as excerpts from personal correspondence. Poetry is also included and

1877-1977
The Japanese Canadians
A Dream of Riches
日系カナダ人百年史
千金の夢
Un Rêve de Richesses
Les Japonais au Canada
1877-1977



expresses the feelings people had at the time. These experiences enhance the text by giving it a richness which history very often lacks. The essence of the people is distilled thus creating a *gestalt* because of the style of presentation, conciseness of wording, and immediacy-- all of which have a great impact. This reveals a consistency with the Japanese aesthetic of minimalism which is evident in Japanese painting, graphic

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art, pottery, photography, and landscape architecture. Less is truly more.

In some of the vignettes, the specious reasoning of the white majority is clearly shown. During the early part of the 20th century, a Japanese labourer working in Woodfibre, B.C. was told by his white employer that "since the living standard of Japanese is lower than ours, it is not necessary to pay you more". In many incidents since their arrival to the post-war era, the Japanese have been prevented from participating as Canadian citizens, especially in the job market. Graduates from universities were denied entry into such professions as law, pharmacy, medicine, and the civil service. Even Rhodes scholars of Japanese ancestry were not immune to racial discrimination. In fact, one such scholar drank himself to death while laboring in a logging camp. Laws always worked against the Japanese and other ethnic peoples.

Without overshadowing the text, the photographs compliment it by combining to create an integrated and harmonious chronicle. They often add visual impact to the word images of the Japanese third-class status. Photographs of prison camp buildings that the Japanese Canadians were forced to 'live' in are ample visual documentation of the conditions under which they lived during the war. These camps were established in remote regions of the country, away from major population centres. Therefore, they were beyond the view of most Canadians.

Other photographs depict the beginning of Japanese social, cultural, and occupational life in Canada beginning with shots of newly arrived immigrants, people in the traditional garb of the Tokugawa period. A number of photographs show Japanese in World War I and II military uniforms fighting for the Allied cause. But in no way did the government of Canada acknowledge the Japanese war effort--fighting for white Westerners with full citizenship.

All the photographs were gathered from across Canada and are mostly personal records of family, community, events. There was no intention to present them as

'Photographic Art' even though they could be included in that new wave school called 'Snapshot Art'.

The entire volume is understated, letting the facts, words, and images speak for themselves. The book would be an invaluable inclusion in any high school level curriculum dealing with such social issues as racism, government, attitude information, history, and current affairs, or as an introduction to a human rights course. It is an excellent contribution to the 'other side' of history. With much power and impact, the book simply states the aspirations, struggles, and unrelenting spirit of the Japanese Canadians' attempt to overcome the great odds in asserting their rightful place in Canadian society.

The deficiencies in the book are scant. It could have described what happened to the Japanese community as it slowly reformed during the 1950's. What were the views of those who worked hard and became successful? What were their attitudes toward their heritage, child-rearing, education, and community? Except for a poem by one of Canada's best poets, Joy Kogawa and a statement by a Nisei living in Vancouver proclaiming the era of the 1950's as the decade of 'paternalistic humanitarianism', nothing else is mentioned.

Despite these trifling blemishes, the book is an outstanding example of a generation who are quite aware of the consequence of not owning their own history:

If we do not, estrangement from our past will be absorbed and driven deeper, surfacing as a fragmentation in ourselves and coming generations.

Although the production of the book and the travelling exhibition were the original goals of the Centennial Project group, they discovered, in achieving them, something far more important -- replenishment of spirit and a pride in their people that was stolen from them. This volume should be dedicated to the group itself.

- MARK YIP

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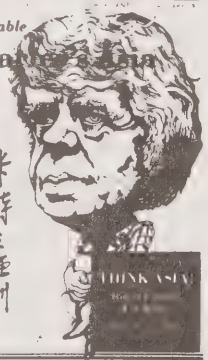
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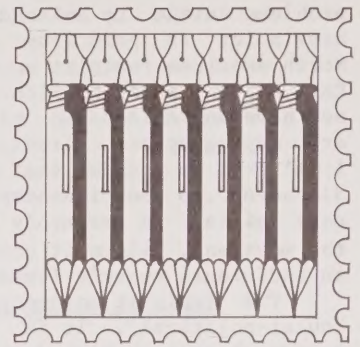


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Letters



Dear Editor:

At long last Asians in Canada have a magazine that they can be proud of. I am very much impressed by the scholarly contents of *The Asianadian*. Your tremendous effort in trying to convey a message of cultural pride and identity in Canada is highly commendable. As an Asian, I receive your message loud and clear!

H.G. Solidon,
Gander, Newfoundland.

Dear Sirs:

I was impressed with your latest issue on Asianadian women. Particularly noteworthy was Momoye Sugiman's editorial. She generally states her case well, but her writing reeks of 'overkill'. For example, she claims that "a surprising number of Asianadian women practise self-denial, deriving their personal identities primarily from their roles as daughters, wives and mothers." I can understand the point she is trying to make here, yet I'm disturbed by her use of the word 'self-denial' in an almost deprecating tone, for further on she states that "if both men and women can begin to regard each other as human beings... we might all experience a wonderful new range of emotions and activities."

Doesn't the successful interaction of men and women require self-denial on each side in deference to the other? Is not this in fact what Ms. Sugiman should be urging, that 'self-denial' is essential to fulfilling inter-human relationships and that it should not all be one-sided. Surely the roles of daughters, wives and mothers are not the be-all and end-all of sources of self-worth for women--and are generally balanced by the roles of sons, husbands and fathers, as sources of self-worth for men.

Ms. Sugiman goes on to say that any woman who "violates the norm" by asking to have her sexual needs fulfilled is labelled "aggressive" and therefore "unfeminine". I would hope that Ms. Sugiman would acknowledge that *any* person, man or woman, who demands to have his desires fulfilled *is* aggressive and more--selfish, thoughtless and immature. This is the point she should be making. If she wishes to attribute this characteristic to a majority of Asianadian and White Canadian men, she better be prepared, and have the guts to back up her assertions with cold, hard data-- not her subjective inclinations.

She continues: "how do we as Asianadian women fit into the North American feminist movement"? This statement reveals the exact context of her editorial insofar as it indicates a feminist bias. Why should Asianadian women have to "fit into" the feminist movement? Such a movement is indeed "amorphous" and tends

to complicate, not solve, the problems of Asianadian women. How many of them, if predisposed to consciousness raising, as I think they are, is Ms. Sugiman prepared to say are inevitably predisposed to feminism? Or is Ms. Sugiman suggesting that the two are one in the same? If so, she is showing an unwarranted bias towards a quasi-political, quasi-militaristic movement. I feel that *The Asianadian* has so far adopted a disdainful "Yellow Power" tone, to which could now be added a "Feminist Yellow Power" tone.

Ms. Sugiman has a case to make for what she calls "self-actualization" among Asianadian women. But insofar as that concept is poisoned by her absurd feminist views, it constitutes not only an "absurdly naive dream", but a corruptively self-destructive one as well.

V. Featherstone,
Toronto

Dear V. Featherstone:

In response to your letter regarding my editorial, I would like to clarify a number of your obviously distorted perceptions, not only of my statements--but of the feminist movement and the relationship between men and women in North American society.

Firstly, my editorial did not pretend to be part of a sociological dissertation on the condition of Asianadian women. Perhaps the intensity of the anger behind my words caused some discomfort for some of our more conservative readers and diminished the validity of my message in their minds. However, I do not intend to apologize for displaying a "feminist bias". Editorial pages have traditionally been designated for personal opinion. Therefore, I feel no necessity to "back up" my "assertions with cold, hard data", (although plenty of data does indeed exist.) Furthermore, anyone with a modicum of political and social consciousness would not deny that women as a class of people are exploited and oppressed. It is a fact--not merely an overstated, "subjective inclination".

Perhaps in an egalitarian utopia somewhere over the rainbow the roles of daughters, wives and mothers are, as you claim, "balanced by the roles of sons, husbands and fathers." However, in the real world, women are still accorded an inferior status. Women are far more "self-denying" than men. And it is not a healthy self-denial, for it prevents many women from developing their intellects and autonomous identities. I do not scorn the roles of mother, daughter or wife. I simply object to the prevalent societal attitudes and conditions which allow these roles to become the only roles open to women.

I openly admit to a "feminist bias". Despite the

problems unique to Asianadian women, I feel that we have a lot to gain from participation in the white, North American feminist movement. Simone de Beauvoir, Kate Millet, Adrienne Rich and Shulamith Firestone may not have any Asianadian blood, but much of what they are saying speaks directly to Asianadian women. Also I believe, as you do, that Asianadian women are "pre-disposed...to consciousness raising." And consciousness raising is certainly essential to the survival of the movement, since it constitutes the first stage in an individual woman's feminist thinking.

The feminist movement is not, as you assert, "quasi-political". It is most definitely 'political'. Another reality which you have failed to grasp is that its ultimate goal is human liberation-- the liberation of both men and women from the stultifying chains of sexism which keep them ignorant of all their human potentialities. Thus I fail to see how feminism can be "absurd" or "corruptively self-destructive". I do not know precisely what you mean by the phrase "Feminist Yellow Power", but obviously you view it with disdain. According to my definition, it simply denotes a pride and dignity in being a woman--and in being of Asian ancestry. If "Feminist Yellow Power" can possibly upset the status quo, then I shall gladly make every effort to encourage its growth. Asianadian women have remained powerless for too long.

Momoye Sugiman,
Editor: Vol. I no. 3
of The Asianadian.



Community News

On January 28, 1979, Toronto cable television subscribers were treated to a special half-hour Chinese New Year's Programme, aptly-titled "Happy New Year".

Presented in English, "Happy New Year" traced the customs and traditions of Chinese New Year celebrations including an explanation of the lunar calendar used by the Chinese to festivities prevalent among Canada's Chinese communities today. The show included reports of events in and around Toronto's Chinatown in preparation for the New Year and highlighted by a lion dance and Buddhist temple ceremony.

The VTR show, produced by the Cinevision Workshop in association with Rogers Cable Television Ltd., is the first in a series of special television programmes featuring the many cultural, artistic, and unique aspects of the Chinese community in Toronto.

Cinevision Workshop was formed by a small group of Chinese Canadians who wish to reach the Chinese in Toronto through the TV medium. According to Larry Au and Wong Yan-Tat, producers of the series, several more programmes are now in progress including a special on three Chinese Canadian artists and a profile-documentary on a Chinese baker, the recipient of several international awards.

Under an agreement with funding government agencies, Rogers Cable TV Ltd, had established a programme to assist with production of shows to any community group on submission and approval of a proposal and outline. Rogers will not only lend equipment and offer the basics in camera handling techniques, it will also provide facilities and personnel to assist with the editing process.

"Happy New Year" is a good example of a community group taking its own initiative in television production. This effort should further encourage other Asian groups to inform their communities of their culture, people, and thoughts.

On March 15, 1979, Aurora High School sponsored a forum to discuss racism and immigration. According to Paul Bennett, the moderator and history teacher at the school "people in Aurora have not been confronted by the racism question as people in larger cities like Toronto." The *Aurora Banner* noted that "not too many students or members of the general public appear to be interested in discussing the question." Despite this fact, those attending were treated to an entertaining discussion on racism as it affects the ethnic groups. The panelists were Rosanna Scotti, Coordinator of Multicultural Relations for Metro Toronto, Jag Bhaduria, Executive Director of the Canadian Council for Racial Harmony, Sid Britton, local political critic and writer and Cheuk Kwan from the Asianadian Resource Workshop.

All the panelists gave short talks on their personal experiences dealing with racism and immigration. These were followed by a question and answer session. Among the issues raised were: interracial marriages, education and understanding, employment and discrimination, and stereotypes. More detailed exchanges were held later with several of the students who took an active interest in the subject.

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